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ALSIKE CLOVER (*Trifolium hybridum*).

Alsike clover is a perennial, intermediate in size and general appearance between the common red clover and white clover. The branching, leafy stems, while not growing as large as those of red clover, commonly reach a height of 18 to 24 inches. The fragrant blossoms have a pinkish tint and furnish large quantities of honey, the plant being often sown for that purpose by bee keepers.

Distribution.—In general alsike clover will grow successfully in all sections where red clover grows, but it is best adapted to a cool, humid climate. It produces its maximum yields near the boundary lines between the United States and Canada and in the regions of the Great Lakes and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It is also grown very successfully in some of the irrigated Rocky Mountain valleys and in certain portions of Kentucky, Tennessee, and other sections where red clover no longer produces satisfactory stands.

Soil requirements.—The most suitable soil for alsike clover is a deep, moist, clay loam. Slough soils that have been deposited by the action of water are also well adapted to it. Good crops are also grown on sandy loam soils well supplied with humus, but this clover will not succeed well on dry, sandy, or porous gravelly soils. It will succeed on soils too wet or too poor in humus for red clover. (See Farmers' Bulletin 455, entitled "Red Clover.")

Sowing.—Like red clover, alsike clover may be sown either alone or in small-grain crops in early spring in the North and early spring or autumn in the southern regions. When sown in the spring in small-grain crops the common practice is to allow the alternate freezing and thawing of the ground to cover the seeds. Very often, however, better results are obtained if the seed is given a light covering with a smoothing harrow or weeder. When sown alone the seed bed should be well settled and finely pulverized on top. On strong, moist soil it should be sown with some grass, such as timothy, orchard grass, or redtop, to prevent lodging. It matures about the same time as these grasses and improves the quality of the hay. On lighter soils, where the growth of grain is not heavy, successful crops are grown when sown with a grain crop; or it may be seeded alone. When sown alone for seed or hay, from 5 to 8 pounds to the acre are usually required. When sown with a mixture of grasses the quantity varies with local conditions, but a fair average for most conditions is 4 pounds of alsike clover and 8 pounds of timothy per acre, or 5 pounds of alsike clover and 5 pounds of recleaned redtop seed. A favorite mixture in the southern tier of States is 10 pounds of orchard grass, 5 pounds of perennial rye-grass, 3 pounds of redtop, and 4 pounds of alsike clover. Some farmers use a mixture of red clover and alsike clover, since the latter is a perennial and will cover the ground when the red clover runs out.

Alsike clover is often used to good advantage in pasture mixtures, especially on wet land and in regions where red clover is not successful. When cut for hay it should be cut just after it has passed full bloom, and it should be handled the same as red clover. The hay is somewhat richer pound for pound than the ordinary red clover, but only one crop is procurable, and this is not generally as heavy as even the first crop usually produced by the ordinary red clover. It is hardier than either the mammoth or ordinary clover, but lodges worse than either. For this reason it is usually best to seed it in mixture either with ordinary red clover or with orchard grass to prevent its lodging.

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